

SOMA

The Travel Issue



**DESTINATION HEARTLAND
PARIS AFTER DARK
MARRAKECH ON \$2000 A DAY**



**THE COSMIC SOUNDS OF 00100
LETTERS FROM KABUL
DAVID LYNCH'S INNER TRAVELS**

Volume 21.4 May/June 2007 USA \$3.50

Canada \$4.50 England £3.00 Japan ¥1000

SALONE INTERNAZIONALE DEL MOBILE

MILAN SPARKLES WITH THE SHIMMER AND SHINE OF DESIGN'S FUTURE

text by **Andrea Balboni**

It's like static; the prickling energy that begins to circulate around Milan at this time of year, perhaps augmented (but not caused) by the advent of spring. It's the kind of energy that cities like New York and Tokyo are constantly alive with, but that this laid-back Mediterranean metropolis feels fully only one week out of the year: during the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, or the Milan International Furniture Fair.

It is universally recognized that while the real "business" of the Milan International Furniture Fair happens in the booths of the official fairground's many pavilions, the true spirit of the Fair—the excitement, the genius, creativity, energy and innovation that pushes the design industry forward and paves the way of the future of design—can be best seen and felt outside of the fairgrounds in the leafy courtyards, spacious ex-industrial spaces, and pristine showrooms of Milan's center.

Fuori Salone had its beginning in the hedonistic 80s when three of Italy's oldest and most innovative furniture companies, Driade (founded in 1968), Cappellini (1946) and De Padova (the 1950's) began to hold spectacular events and fantastic parties in alternative spaces throughout Milan. The companies were using the spacious, less expensive spaces throughout the city to promote their products far away from the restraints imposed by the official Salone fairgrounds.

And so the carnival began. Year after year, more and more companies and young designers from around the world present their work in alternative venues throughout the city center. On any given night during Milan Design Week (as the days surrounding the fair have come to be known) you can find the streets filled with designers, artists, students, buyers, producers and design junkies wandering in and out of the city's brightly-lit showrooms excitedly exchanging tips on where the hottest Fuori Salone events are happening and what must be seen.

Sure to pass the lips of fair-goers this year will be the names Job Smeets and Nynke Tynagel, the Belgian/Dutch couple that forms Studio Job. The young team promises to make waves with work being presented by the iconic New York-based design store Moss (it is the first time Moss has participated in the Salone, but I suspect not the last), in association with the Groninger Museum in the Netherlands. Studio Job has also collaborated this year with Bisazza, the forward-thinking Italian ceramic company. Bisazza has teamed up with talented young Spanish artist/designer Jaime Hayon as well to create "Pinocchione," a giant Pinocchio-type figure decked out in black and white Bisazza mosaic tiles along with more functional pieces including



lights and pedestals.

Studio Baas & den Herder (Netherlands) was established by Maarten Michaël Baas to produce his own work. Baas is yet another key player who will be exhibiting work in the Zona Tortona district. On display will be "historic" lines such as "Smoke," first adopted by Marcel Wanders's Dutch brand, Moooi. The coal-colored pieces from "Smoke" are striking and fascinating, as the collection was made by burning pieces of furniture and then preserving them with clear epoxy. Pieces were purchased by museums and collectors (Philippe Starck amongst them), went on exhibit at the Victoria & Albert museum and the Moss gallery, and then were chosen for the rooms and the lobby of the Gramercy Park Hotel in New York along with some pieces from another one of Baas' surprising and delightful lines, "Clay."

Back inside the fairgrounds, the work of one young American designer will be presented

by leading Italian furniture production innovators. Danese has chosen to produce "Smith," a multi-purpose home/office cart by Jonathan Olivares of Boston. Italian producers remain amongst the most desired furniture companies to work with, as they are consistently competitive and fresh due to their passion for quality and craftsmanship, and for research, development and exploration of new technologies.

London-based designer Damian Williamson recently acknowledged that Italian producers, such as Maddalena De Padova, "show an unflagging concern for new ideas." Young Italian designer Sandro Meneghello of Meneghello+Paoletti studio agrees, and explains that the reality of the small-to-medium-sized Italian company (which most of these producers are) is that they tend to be more loosely structured, leaving room for a designer's voice to be heard and acknowledged. The limited sizes of the companies allow them to focus on a smaller, high-end market that responds to such unique voices.

These practical realities combine with the fact that qualities of "good taste" and "beauty" remain highly valued parts of Italian design culture. These factors drive Italian producers to support and develop some of the best and most innovative work in the industry. Peter Solomon, an industrial designer who founded his studio here in Milan 15 years ago, comments on his experiences. "Design is discussed in the barber shop, at the bar, where everyone expresses their view freely because art and culture are part of the day-to-day life of the Italians."

One might find it surprising, then, that Italian production companies and young designers worldwide

CONTINUES ON PAGE 94

STOCKIST

ALEXANDRE HERCHCOVITCH

ALICE RITTER WWW.ALICERITTER.COM

AMERICAN APPAREL WWW.AMERICANAPPAREL.NET

BLESS

BORA AKSU WWW.BORAAKSU.COM

BOUDICCA

CHANEL WWW.CHANEL.COM

DHINI WWW.DHINICOUTURE.COM

DIESEL WWW.DIESEL.COM

FLIGHT 001 WWW.FLIGHT001.COM

GAP BODY WWW.GAP.COM

GUCCI WWW.GUCCI.COM

H&M WWW.HM.COM

JASON WU WWW.JASONWUSTUDIO.COM

JEAN PAUL GAULTIER WWW.JEANPAUL-GAULTIER.COM

KIKI DE MONTPARNASSE WWW.KIKIDM.COM

LEANA ZUNIGA

LEVI'S WWW.LEVI.COM

LINCOLN MAYNE WWW.LINCOLNMAYNE.COM

LISELOTTE

MISS SIXTY WWW.MISSSIXTY.COM

M/M BY MASAYUKI MARUKAWA

MOMO FALANA WWW.MOMOFALANA.COM

NEAL SPERLING WWW.NEALSPERLING.COM

OBEDIENT SONS WWW.OBEDIENTSONS.COM

OLIVER SPENCER WWW.OLIVERSPENCER.CO.UK

PASSION BAIT WWW.PASSIONBAIT.COM

PETIT BATEAU WWW.PETIT-BATEAU.COM

PRINGLE WWW.PRINGLESCOTLAND.COM

ROBIN WHIT

SAMANTHA PLEET WWW.SAMANTHAPLEET.COM

SANG A WWW.SANGA.COM

SASS AND BIDE WWW.SASSANDBIDE.COM

SCREAMING MIMI'S WWW.SCREAMINGMIMIS.COM

STEVEJ & YONIP WWW.STEVEYONISTUDIO.COM

THE SOCKMAN WWW.THESOCKMAN.COM

TOUJOURS TOI BY NINA EGLI WWW.TOUJOURSTOI.COM

TROVATA WWW.TROVATA.COM

FRANK TROPIANO

T.U.K. INC WWW.TUKSHOES.COM

WE LOVE COLORS WWW.WELOVECOLORS.COM

WOLFORD

YOHJI YAMAMOTO WWW.YOHIYAMAMOTO.CO.JP

The Beauty of Sex continued from page 31

with condoms, and is both fragrance and flavor-free, allowing you to reapply with blissful abandon. Kiki's Silicone Personal Lubricant, sharing all the qualities of its water-based counterpart, is waterproof and lasts longer—when you can commit a whole night to no sleep (wink). BabeLube pointedly states it's great for "anal as well as vaginal penetration." Like Kiki, this water-based, glycerin-free lube has no smell, no taste, "just good slick fun." And we like that it comes in four sizes of handy, no-frills pump bottles. Remember next time to look for lubrication in all the right places, because—as we've reported—not all lubes are created equal.

Salone Internazionale del Mobile continued from page 34

are looking outside of Italy for new creative input. The shadow of history may be long and cast by a dense history of brilliant design figures from Vico Magistretti to Achille Castiglioni to Ettore Sottsass, but the future of design is no longer concentrated here, except for the heady week of the Salone del Mobile. For a few fleeting days, the global design community gathers for the visual feast and business rewards that the Salone promises and delivers, but then the spark, the tingling

static, dissipates back to the many nations from which it came. The future of design is truly global.

9 Perfect Minutes With John Doe continued from page 84

about you? That I think a lot of myself. No, the biggest misconception is that I'm some sort of icon. That is the biggest misconception. Or that it actually makes a difference. Or the biggest misconception in my acting career is that I'm just a musician.

Something you've always wanted to do but haven't got around to yet? Going to the Amazon or being in a John Waters movie. Then my life would be complete. Then I could check off that box. Maybe the fact that I've peed on film will get me that much closer.

You peed on film? Yeah, when I was doing the HBO series *Carnaval*, and so I can check that off of my list. I did it three times.

Was that a little shameful? No.

Do you have a motto? To be in the moment. To trust your intuition, and the best thing and the hardest thing is to be in touch with your intuition and to keep that available.